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Spoken submission on Proposed District Plan, Lower Hutt 27 May 2026

By Merran Bakker

Good afternoon, my name is Merran Bakker and I am a member of the Petone Historical Society and a long-time resident of Britannia Street, Petone. My husband and I bought the Petone Borough Council heritage listed house at 57 Britannia Street in 1981 and lived there with our family until 2022 when we moved it forward on the site and had it renovated for family members to buy and built a new home for ourselves at the rear of the large section.

I have been involved as a submitter on previous plan changes including Plan change 25, 29 and 56 all of which had effects on our local environment.

I support the submission of the Petone Historical Society asking for mixed use zones to be removed from three streets in Petone and want to address my comments to Britannia Street. I consider introducing mixed use into this area is both undesirable and unnecessary.

Britannia Street is exceptional in Petone as a residential street which is highly valued for its heritage whilst also housing buildings that serve the community. Not only our villa but another nine properties along the street are listed on the current District Plan as having heritage value – and several of these are in the area proposed for mixed use. This heritage deserves protection.

In the proposed mixed-use zone are three churches (all with heritage features), the community house, the library and two primary schools. People come from Petone and beyond for the schools, Hutt City's second most popular library, the community house and the churches-all of which offer services that complement the residential area. As well as this there are some single homes connected with the churches and a large area of affordable housing, which I estimate to have about 66 homes in it. These former council flats were designed to create a community and while they are now a mixture of privately owned and rental properties, they are among the most affordable small units in Petone.

It is hard to see a rationale for changing the nature of this area to include light industry and further retail. These aspects of mixed use would be detrimental to the historic, residential and community environment of our street. The High Density Residential zone is to me a more suitable zone for Britannia street, as this zoning is already permissible enough. Over our time in Petone we have seen the continuation of residential growth in the street as single houses were moved off large sections to make way for multiple dwellings. So the street, with 59 street numbers has multiple times that many dwellings – all within easy reach of the community amenities nearby, and shops in the commercial area of Jackson Street. Britannia Street is a special street, which does not need to transition over time into something non-residential.

It is not necessary to expand commercial activities from Jackson Street into Britannia St as is proposed because the retail area is adequate. Moving part of Britannia Street into a more permissive zone will not only be detrimental to our street's amenity but also undermine the heritage precinct of Jackson Street with its small businesses. The nearby General Business areas also have scope for plenty of light industrial activity without adding this into such an important residential street.

I therefore ask that Britannia Street be kept as residential and removed from the mixed use zone.